

4-13-1979

(SNP120) Marguerite Sutherland interviewed by
Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Sharon G.
Marston

Marguerite Sutherland

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/snp>

Recommended Citation

Marguerite Sutherland interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, April 13, 1979, SdArch SNP-120, Shenandoah National Park Oral History Collection, 1964-1999, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the JMU Special Collections at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Shenandoah National Park Oral History Collection by an authorized administrator of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact dc_admin@jmu.edu.

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

NARRATOR	Mrs. Margueritte Sutherland
INTERVIEWER	Mrs. Dorothy Smith
PLACE	Rapidan River-Graves Mill
DATE	April 13, 1979

TRANSCRIBED BY:

Sharon G. Marston

COMPLETED DATE:

October 6, 1981

This is Dorothy Smith interviewing

D.S.: ... Margueritte Sutherland..uh, who lived on the Rapidan River.

M.S.: .. Graves Mill..the town...

D.S.: What, Graves Mill. Right. What was your maiden name?

M.S.: Daniel.

D.S.: Daniel.

M.S.: D A N I E L.

D.S.: Okey, now when you were...were you a member of a large family?

M.S.: Five..uh, it was seven of us. Five children and my daddy and mother. Seven of us.

D.S.: Seven. Then did you have a fairly good size house?

M.S.: We had seven rooms. *and 2 porches.*

D.S.: Um, nice. Now that was unusual for that area wasn't it? Yea.

Who was your nearest neighbor.

M.S.: Uh, the nearest one would be Jenkins.

D.S.: Jenkins family.

How far away were they.

M.S.: Well it was within in sight of our home. We could see *their homes from ours.*

D.S.: About a quarter of mile would you say.

M.S.: Something like that.

D.S.: Yea. Did your family own the land or did they pay taxes on it?

M.S.: We owned the whole thing. He had 168 acres.

D.S.: Great. You had an orchard?

Apples, peaches..

M.S.: Yes mam. Damsens, and plums...I'm not sure about the plums, but I know we had damsens, pears.

D.S.: Umm..did you have those *MILAM* mylum apples?

M.S.: Yes mam.

D.S.: You did. Did your family dry apples?

M.S.: Yes mam, we did that.

D.S.: Okey, how did you dry them?

M.S.: Uh, we sliced them real thin and put them on a sheet and put them on the roof so the sun could dry them.

D.S.: Would you take them in of an evening?

M.S.: Yes mam. Took them in every day. Cause see they would draw dampness in the evening.

D.S.: Sure, right.

M.S.: But them out the next day. *until they get dry.* Store them in a bag.

D.S.: They were good, weren't they?

M.S.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: Did you ever sell any of them?

M.S.: It seems like we did, I'm not sure, but I think my mother did.

D.S.: Okey. You had chickens?

M.S.: Yes mam. Turkeys, and guinnies..

D.S.: Guinnies?

M.S.: Yes mam. Cows and sheep

D.S.: How many cows?

M.S.: I can't think how many cows...there were a bunch of them.

D.S.: A bunch of cows. Well you didn't need all that milk did you?

M.S.: No, used the milk for the hogs and sold cream and butter.

D.S.: When you sold it did you get credit in the store or did they give you cash?

M.S.: Uh, cash.

D.S.: They gave you cash. You went down to Neathers with it or to Graves Mill.

M.S.: Uh, we sold at different places.

D.S.: Okey. And you always got cash?

M.S.: Yes, mam.

D.S.: That's unusual. Um, you raised hogs?

M.S.: Yes mam.

D.S.: You'd sell the hams then too?

M.S.: Well mostly we'd sell the sides. And we'd eat the hams. And *shoulders.* ~~sell the other.~~

D.S.: Uhhuh. You preserved the hams, for over the winter? By salt method?

M.S.: Salt and pepper. And then we'd take the hams and put brown sugar over and cure them like. I don't know what all you do put on it.

D.S.: Brown sugar.

M.S.: Yes. Wrap them in paper.

D.S.: Did your family raise wheat?

M.S.: Yes mam. Oats, and raised uh^{we}..had a garden.

D.S.: What did you have in the garden?

M.S.: Corn and beans, and tomatoes and potatoes, and radishes and lettuce, cucumbers, and watermelon patch. We had that.

D.S.: Did you have rhubarb?

M.S.: Rhubarb, we had that.

D.S.: Asparagus?

M.S.: Yes mam.

D.S.: You had good soil then didn't you?

M.S.: Yes we did. Real good.

D.S.: It wasn't rocky?

M.S.: No, I mean..some of it was rocky but most of it was level. We could sow..I mean raise wheat and corn and hay ^{in level fields} ~~for the other people~~..in the pasture field was rocky.

D.S.: Uhhuh. With your corn and wheat, you took that to the miller?

M.S.: Yes mam.

D.S.: Did you pay him to do it or did he take away part of it.

M.S.: Well, he taken part of it, as we had it done...you know corn for cornmeal, and wheat for flour.

D.S.: Yea, that's right. Uh, okey. Oh this is great. Now you were on the Rapidan?

M.S.: Yes mam.

D.S.: Well did your brother's fish and your father fish?

M.S.: No. They didn't fish. It's a wonder..right on the river..but they never did go fishing.

D.S.: Did they go hunting?

M.S.: Well I think my brother went hunting.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you ever see any bear?

M.S.: No, never seen a bear.

D.S.: Any deer?

M.S.: Yea. We seen deer. *them*

D.S.: I didn't think you'd say this.

M.S.: Yes we seen deer, but we never did see a bear.

D.S.: Uhhuh..huh..did you have a lot of *woods* on your property?

M.S.: Right much, uhhuh.

D.S.: Did your family cut any of the timber?

M.S.: Yea. We cut it, sawed it up and used it for wood..for heat I mean..

D.S.: Oh, for heat. You didn't sell any of the lumber?

M.S.: Yea, we sold some.

D.S.: ~~Did~~ you take bark off of the trees?

M.S.: No. We didn't take that off. I don't think we did now. *We* He might have *and I*

D.S.: Uhhuh...well if you'd have done it you'd have remembered it. That was a lot of work. *just forgot.*

M.S.: Yes, it was.

D.S.: Did you have any special jobs? That you were suppose to do? Being a large family was it your job like to milk the cows?

M.S.: Yea, I had to help to milk.

D.S.: Did the cows have bells on them or were they in a field?

M.S.: Not too many bells..they were in a field.

D.S.: Okey. That was enclosed?

M.S.: Yes.

D.S.: Yea. Did you ever eat beef?

M.S.: Yes mam. And mutton..we killed sheep and ate the mutton.

D.S.: You had sheep?

M.S.: Yea, we had sheep

D.S.; Did your mother do any spinning?

M.S.: No we never done that.

D.S.: Did you sell the wool?

M.S.: Yea, we sold the wool. We would sheer in May and sell the wool.

D.S.: Did you have to do the sheep dipping and all that?

M.S.: No we didn't do that.

D.S.: There is a whole difference now in the number of bugs and so on from what
there used to be.

M.S.: Yea. Lots different ^{from} what it used to be.

D.S.: Did you raise honey..you know get honey? Gather honey or

M.S.: No, we didn't have no bees.

D.S.: Okey, now with your...you had the cows...you didn't kill any of your cows
for the beef...

M.S.: Yes we did.

D.S.: You did. Oh well then you really had a lot of cows

M.S.: Yes we did. Had a lot of them.

D.S.: Did you preserve them in any way over the winter?

M.S.: What do you mean...

D.S.: No, no, how did you hold them over the winter?

M.S.: Well we had hay and stuff raised and ~~food~~^{feed} for them to eat.

D.S.: No. I mean after you had killed them so you would have beef to eat in the
winter.

M.S.: Well we had a freezer to put it in..deep freeze.

D.S.: Mou had a deep freeze? Wow. Did you...how did you keep your vegetables?

Over the winter.

M.S.: Can them.

D.S.: Did you ever dig a trench? And put the cabbages in them?

M.S.: Yea we done that..potatoes and apples..

D.S.: And turnips and

M.S.: Yea, buried the turnips...

D.S.: And that kept them good?

M.S.: Yea, it did. Real good.

D.S.: Now how come did your family have more money than most of them? Did your father work outside...

M.S.: He was on a farm all of his life.

D.S.: Uhhuh. So he was never hired out?

M.S.: Huhuh..never hired out.

D.S.: Where did you go to school?

M.S.: At Madison County and Graves Mill.

D.S.: Was that far from your home?

M.S.: Just a little ways. We could walk to school. That was just grade school.

I went to *high in Madison*

D.S.: You did...how did you get there?

M.S.: Rode a bus. School bus.

D.S.: The school that you went to..was that like September through May.

M.S.:yea, I believe it was. Started in September through May.

D.S.: Was it the traditional one room schoolhouse type?

M.S.: Yea. It was.

D.S.: And you .. uh you were taught what? Reading, writing...

M.S.: English..history..geography..spelling..

D.S.: Boy you really got an education. Uhhuh..now what..if you got a cold what would your mother give you?

M.S.: Castor Oil mostly. Something I hated. She gave..I mean mama would hold me and daddy would give it to me. *Hold my nose and* Swallow it *I* hate to think about

about taking it. Nasty...

D.S.: I know it is. Did your mother know any other herbs? Like uh..anything that you had..uh..I can't think of anything but a cold right now. Well any childhood diseases...

M.S.: Whopping Cough?

D.S.: Yea. What would she give for that.

M.S.: Can't think what we took for that.

D.S.: Did you drink *teas*?

M.S.: We had them, chicken pox; we had to take some kind of medicine to break out with measles, but I can't think of the name of it.

D.S.: Would your family have the doctor come check with you?

M.S.: Yea. *a. family doctor.*

D.S.: You mentioned the other day when I was here that you remembered Dr. Ross.

Did they use him?

M.S.: Yea...Criglersville's where he lived..we had him come see us..Dr. Early ..

D.S.: Doctor.. Uhuh. Yea.

M.S.: Yea..Yea. Doctor Ross has been to see us. But he's passed away now..

D.S.: He sure has yea.

M.S.: But he was a good doctor.

D.S.: He sure was. Yea. Uh, would it be against the law if I shut this door. There is so much noise going on out there and I want your voice to come through clearly. Uh..okey..your mother made her own soap?

M.S.: Yes mam.

D.S.: The lye soap..

M.S.: And she made the cold water ~~soap~~...didn't have to put no lye in that.

D.S.: Cold water soap.

M.S.: Yes.

D.S.: How was that made?

M.S.: Just cook it on the stove and put lard in it...and I reckon you did have to put lye in it, but you didn't put too much...it seems like you just made a pan of it as you use^{it}..seems like you made it today and tomorrow you can cut it...cools off so quick.

D.S.: And did it really clean the clothes?

M.S.: Yea.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Was wash day much of a chore?

M.S.: Yea, at that time we had to wash it you know with a tub and wash board.

D.S.: Sure.

M.S.: There wasn't no washing machine then.

D.S.: No. No indeed. Uh, when the children were born did you have a doctor come...

M.S.: Yes mam we had a doctor. Dr. Early was our doctor.

D.S.: Uh, how did your mother cook. Did she have a wood burning stove.

M.S.: Woodburning ...

D.S.: Yea. Uh, what would be a typical breakfast?

M.S.: What did we have for breakfast? Side meat or eggs..sometimes we made hot biscuits...gravy^{just}..potatoes..we'd have milk and coffee.

D.S.: Yea. Did your mother make her own yeast?

M.S.: Yes mam. She made her own yeast.

D.S.: That's good. With the canning would you process the vegetables the way we do now?

M.S.: Yea.

D.S.: I_n hot water?

M.S.: Yes mam.

D.S.: Right.

M.S.: She would do the peas that a way, the beans..cause if you do that and put them in the can they don't go down as ^{much} good.

D.S.: Did you dry beans?

M.S.: Yes. We dried them.

D.S.: How would you dry them? String them up?

M.S.: Yea, string them up. *String em on a string.*

D.S.: Uhhuh. They were good weren't they?

M.S.: Yea, they were..very good.

D.S.: How about your applebutter boilings?

M.S.: Yea, we made applebutter. Pearbutter.

D.S.: Pearbutter.

M.S.: Yes mam. I like that better than I do applebutter.

D.S.: Did you make it the same way?

M.S.: Yea, I think you did.

D.S.: It sounds good. Yea. Was it a party like when you'd make it?

M.S.: Well, we'd get a bunch to come in and peel a day and a night and then next morning real early put it on. It takes all day to cook applebutter.

D.S.: Sure.

M.S.: I think that's the way it was with the pearbutter.

D.S.: Yea. You used a copper kettle?

M.S.: Yes mam. *Yea* *butter* ~~Put~~ the apples ~~in~~ with the pearbutter I don't remember exactly what kind of kettle we put that in.

D.S.: Yea. Probably an iron wouldn't you think...yea...

M.S.: Could have been. But the applebutter it was a copper kettle.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did any of the people around you make moonshine?

M.S.: No.

D.S.: No. The Weakleys lived right up above you didn't they?

M.S.: They lived at Criglersville didn't they?

D.S.: No there were Weakley's further up the mountain.

M.S.: I don't know them.

D.S.: Did you do much visiting?

M.S.: Right much.

D.S.: In between different hollows. Uh, when would you do that? On a Saturday evening or a Sunday?

M.S.: Yea, Saturday and Sunday.

D.S.: It was fun, wasn't it?

M.S.: Yea, it was. They don't visit now like they used to.

D.S.: No. If you visited somebody and they were busy doing something..what would you do help them?

M.S.: Dig in and help them.

D.S.: Uhhum..When President Hoover decided he wanted to make Camp Hoover there what was the reaction? Of the People?

M.S.: Well as far as I know they didn't kick ^{about it.}...I don't think they did.

D.S.: Did you ever go visiting there?

M.S.: Well we went to his Camp and had a dance one ^{night.} ~~time.~~ I can't remember if he was still living at that time or not.

D.S.: Went there and had a dance..

M.S.: Yea ... had a dance up there ... *had some fiddlers along, a bunch of us went up and* and had a good time.

D.S.: I'll bet you did. What would you play...a fiddle,banjo, *you* harp, harmonica..

M.S.: Yea. Yea. I think so. I know we played... *many instruments* but it's been so long since...I bout forgot how to play. Had a good time dancing.

D.S.: Sure. Did you have dances often?

M.S.: Well we'd have them in our home when we were 21..five of us had a birthday...

a dance when we was 21. Then we'd have other parties around.
They don't do that anymore.

D.S.: No. They really had a good time..

M.S.: Yes they did have a good time.

D.S.: Sure. How did a fellow court a girl?

M.S.: Well they'd ask her for a date and come see them is about all I can tell you.

D.S.: Were they chaperoned?

M.S.: No.

D.S.: Huh, okey. Uh, how about weddings...were they very simple?

M.S.: Yea. They didn't go to as much as they do now. Church wedding and all..

D.S.: Yea, uh, the church was that near you?

M.S.: Yea, our church was right *in sight of us the* Baptist Church.

D.S.: Oh, great. Nice. Alright now, when somebody died did they do any embalming?

M.S.: Yes mam. At that time they did.

D.S.: Okey. Would you make the casket? Or buy it?

M.S.: Bought it.

D.S.: Bought it? And you bought monuments then?

M.S.: Yea.

D.S.: And they'd bury them right on their own property or on the church?

M.S.: Church lot. *We* wouldn't have to pay so much for the lot..
grave, at the time.

D.S.: Yea. What kind of toys did you have when you were a little girl?

M.S.: Doll babies, dishes, doll beds...cradles...

D.S.: Did you get these at Christmas?

M.S.: Yes mam.

D.S.: Then Christmas was a fun time for you wasn't it?

M.S.: Yes it was.

D.S.: Alright now..of an evening would you all sit around and tell ghost stories?

M.S.: Yea, we'd tell things like that.

D.S.: Can you remember any of them?

M.S.: I don't believe I can it's been so long?

D.S.: How about practical jokes? Did you play practical jokes on each other?

M.S.: No.

D.S.: Oh, you should have played them. Was it..did you work pretty hard... *what*

M.S.: Yea, pretty hard. *there?*

D.S.: What time would you get up in the morning?

M.S.: About 7 o'clock. Cause we had cows to milk and hogs and things..well my daddy did that kind of work. *and we helped him.*

D.S.: Yea, and then you had to get to school.

M.S.: Yea.!

D.S.: Uhhuh. And then when you came home from school then did you have to do things too?

M.S.: Uhhuh. Wood to get in..milk the cows again.

D.S.: Yea. Did you ever hear of people **deliberately** starting fires in the park.. in the mountains?

M.S.: Yea.. We had that done a lot

D.S.: For huckleberries?

M.S.: Yea, for huckleberries.

D.S.: Yea. Did you ever pick huckleberries?

is a job..they are so small..

M.S.: Yea about once or twice..boy **that!**..used to pick blackberries and rasberries..

And can them.

D.S.: Oh yea. You didn't sell them?

M.S.: No.

D.S.: No, Okey. Now a lot of the pictures that we have at Park Headquarters show a ladder up against a chimney...do you know why those ladders were there?

M.S.: No.

D.S.: We were wondering if maybe it was because people were afraid of fires.

M.S.: I wouldn't know.

D.S.: Okey..do..uh, did you celebrate Easter?

M.S.: No. I know we died eggs, and hid them in the yard...that's about all we did.

D.S.: Thanksgiving?

M.S.: Have a turkey, *and other things with it.*

D.S.: Had your own turkey.

M.S.: Yea.

D.S.: Were these white turkeys or dark turkeys?

M.S.: Uh, gray..ones...

D.S.: I have heard that some people to improve the uh..you know the type chickens or turkeys that they had would exchange ^{you} between neighbor. Did your mother ever do that?

M.S.: Yes she did.

D.S.: Yea. What kind of a lock did you have on your door?

M.S.: Just an old key

D.S.: Uhhuh, you did have a lock then?

M.S.: Yea, we had a lock on it.

D.S.: So there was some stealing that went on?

M.S.: Well I don't know if we ever had anything done like that. We had a habit of locking our doors at night time.

D.S.: Yea. In making your garden, you plowed the garden...

M.S.: Yea..disked it too.

D.S.: You did? Did you use a horse?

M.S.: *Yes, we had horses.*

D.S.: And did you use a horse to get places or did you walk? Mostly..

M.S.: We uh, had a buggy..put the horse to it. Then ^{my Daddy} he got a '23 Model T..

D.S.: Ah..

M.S.: So his bldest daughter could drive that.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Uh, did you all make sorghum?

M.S.: Mollasses. Yea.

D.S.: Was that a lot of hard work?

M.S.: Right hard.

D.S.: It was. Uhhuh. Okey, now I've been doing all the asking and I'm sure you have

..have a lot of memories that I can't even know about unless you tell me. Uh,
for instance you say your mother made your clothes?

M.S.: Yea. She made most of our clothes.

D.S.: What did they look like?

M.S.: Material you mean?

D.S.: Yea.

M.S.: It was a print mostly.

D.S.; And you'd buy that down at Graves Mill?

M.S.: Well Madison the stores would have material...

D.S.: Yea. Shoes..

M.S.: We had to buy them. My daddy would half sole them.

D.S.: Oh, well he was sort of a cobbler then wasn't he?

M.S.: Yea, he was.

D.S.: Did you ever have the metal thing around your heel?

M.S.: Yea. Heal..what do you call them..cletes..yea we had them on our shoes..

D.S.: Did that make it easier to walk up the mountain.

M.S.: Yea.. *And* you didn't wear the heal tap off as quick.

D.S.: Sure. Did you wear shoes all summer?

M.S.: No..went barefoot..couldn't hardly wait to go barefooted. Mama said you couldn't go barefoot til

first of May. *oh Ma, let me go, its hot today, I loved to go barefoot...*

D.S.: And you weren't worried about snakes? *Just forgot what she looked like*

M.S.: There wasn't too many snakes then, I don't think. Not too many.

D.S.: There weren't. Gee. How did you feel when you knew the park was going in?

M.S.: I didn't think anything about it.

D.S.: Uhhuh. And you never saw President Hoover?

M.S.: Yea. Maybe once or twice.

D.S.: Oh you did. Did you see Mrs. Hoover?

M.S.: No I never did see his wife that I know of. If I did, I ~~didn't~~...

He was kind of a heavy set man.

D.S.: Mrs. Sutherland, I do want to thank you very very much for this and I may stop by some time and ask you some more questions but, uh, since you do have to go...you have helped us tremendously.....clear this stuff out right away..

(What did you have a meeting)

No I was interviewing her for the Shenandoah National Park.

No I live in Luray...Yea that's right.

(Marguerite Sutherland she lived in the Shenandoah)

Yea. Well practically got this out of the way.

.....no it's wet..I'll have to hold it a second.

Mrs. Sutherland was interviewed at a Nursing Home in Harrisonburg. This accounts for the background sounds.